

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method, comprising:
2 receiving a request to perform a task at a remote computer from a caller
3 computer on a network; and
4 executing the task at the remote computer independent of an operating
5 system of the remote computer.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising initializing a listening mechanism to
2 receive the request.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising initiating an interrupt to a processor
2 of the remote computer by the listening mechanism when the request is received at
3 the remote computer.
- 1 4. The method of claim 2, further comprising periodically polling a network
2 interface of the remote computer by the listening mechanism to determine if the
3 remote computer has received a request.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the request is received at the remote
2 computer in the form of a request packet.

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the request packet comprises programming
2 code to be executed by the remote computer.

1 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the programming code is a scripting language.

1 8. The method of claim 5 wherein the request packet comprises an interface
2 packet to call a pre-defined function of firmware of the remote computer.

1 9. The method of claim 5 wherein the request packet comprises a memory
2 packet to access contents of a memory address of the remote computer.

1 10. The method of claim 5 wherein the request packet comprises a data
2 structure packet to access data of a data structure of the remote computer.

1 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising returning a response to the caller
2 computer containing indicia relating to performance of the task.

1 12. The method of claim 11 wherein the response is returned to the caller
2 computer in the form of a response packet.

1 13. The method of claim 11 wherein the response comprises an error message if
2 the remote computer fails to successfully execute the task.

1 14. An article of manufacture, comprising:
2 a machine-readable medium on which a plurality of instructions are stored,
3 which when executed perform operations comprising:
4 processing a request packet received from a caller computer at a remote
5 computer over a network;
6 executing a task contained in the request packet, wherein executing the task
7 is performed independent of the operating system of the remote computer; and
8 returning a response packet to the caller computer containing information
9 regarding the outcome of the task.

1 15. The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein the request packet comprises
2 an interface packet to call a programmatic interface of firmware of the remote
3 computer.

1 16. The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein the request packet comprises
2 a memory packet to access contents of a memory address of the remote computer.

1 17. The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein the request packet comprises
2 a data structure packet to access data of a data structure maintained by firmware of
3 the remote computer.

1 18. The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein the request packet comprises
2 programming code to be executed under the control of firmware of the remote
3 computer.

1 19. The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein execution of the plurality of
2 instructions further perform operations comprising receiving the request packet via a
3 listening mechanism of the remote computer.

1 20. The article of manufacture of claim 19 wherein the listening mechanism
2 comprises a polling mechanism to periodically check if the request packet is stored
3 in a network interface of the remote computer.

1 21. The article of manufacture of claim 19 wherein the listening mechanism
2 issues an interrupt to a processor of the remote computer when the request packet
3 is received at a network interface of the remote computer.

1 22. The article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein the plurality of instructions to
2 operate in accordance with an Extensible Firmware Interface (EFI) framework
3 standard.

1 23. A computer system, comprising:
2 a processor;
3 a network interface operatively coupled to the processor; and

4 at least one flash device operatively coupled to the processor on which
5 firmware instructions are stored, which when executed by the processor perform
6 operations comprising:
7 receiving a request packet from a caller computer via the network interface;
8 processing the request packet;
9 performing a task assigned in the request packet, wherein the task is
10 performed independent of an operating system of the computer system; and
11 returning a response packet to the caller computer that includes information
12 regarding the outcome of the task.

1 24. The computer system of claim 23 wherein the task is expressed in a scripting
2 language to be executed under the control of the firmware instructions.

1 25. The computer system of claim 23 wherein receiving the request packet
2 comprises storing at least a portion of the request packet in the network interface.

1 26. The computer system of claim 23 wherein the firmware instructions to operate
2 in accordance with an Extensible Firmware Interface (EFI) framework standard.

1 27. A method, comprising:
2 sending a request packet from a caller computer to at least one remote
3 computer over a network, the request packet including a request to perform a task

4 under the control of firmware of the remote computer and independent of an
5 operating system of the remote computer; and
6 receiving at the caller computer a response packet from each of the at least
7 one remote computer, the response packet containing indicia relating to
8 performance of the task.

1 28. The method of claim 27 wherein the request packet includes arguments for a
2 protocol interface to be executed by the at least one remote computer.

1 29. The method of claim 27 wherein the request packet includes a scripting
2 language to be executed by the at least one remote computer.

1 30. The method of claim 27 wherein the request packet is sent to the at least one
2 remote computer at a pre-set time designated at the caller computer.